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No. 377

JUST WOMEN

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

BY

COLIN CAMPBELL CLEMENTS

Author of *Pirates*, *The Touchstone*, *Aunt Betty of Butte*,
A Man and His Wife, etc.

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First Produced at San Francisco, Little Theatre. Later by
Carnegie Repertory Theatre and Eugene
Woman's Club.

PRICE 30 CENTS

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JUST WOMEN

CHARACTERS

MRS. WARREN
 BETTY
 MRS. PICKERING
 MRS. LAWTY
 MRS. ROMNEY
 LADY BLOSHIRE
 CLARA

SCENE: *The play takes place in the living room of the WARREN home. It is during the early part of the Victorian period and MRS. WARREN'S drawing-room is filled with atrocious furniture of that period. At rise of curtain MRS. WARREN is sitting before an open fire at the L. knitting. CLARA comes in softly and lights the lamp on the table near the window at the back and pulls down the shades.*

MRS. WARREN. Is that you, Clara? Will you please light the lamp—the big one. It is so dark here—the fog is very thick this afternoon; although I have lived here for forty years, I declare I shall never get used to it. It is always dark in Northampton! (CLARA gets as far as the door) Clara, will you pull the shades—one never knows who might look in—people are getting so bold nowadays—so bold. (CLARA pulls the shades and starts out again) What time is it—the stage should be in at four or

thereabouts—do you suppose anything could have happened—happened in the fog, you know. Clara, do have a nice dinner to-night. Betty will be so tired, poor child. I am so glad the women of Northampton do not know she is coming to-day. It is such a long way, such an awfully long way to London—it must be all of two hundred miles. Oh yes, Clara, don't forget to make the tea rather strong to-night—not too strong—just so—and, Clara, we might have a little jelly with our meat to-night—current jelly—and you may use the best napkins—just to-night. We must not use the good ones too often as I want to keep them new for the——

CLARA. For the what, ma'am?

MRS. WARREN. Eh? What did you say, Clara?

CLARA. (*Shouting*) What is it you want to keep the new napkins for?

MRS. WARREN. I want to keep them for the—never mind now, Clara, I just want to keep them.

CLARA. Yes ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. Oh dear, I hope Betty will be satisfied with Northampton after living a year in London. It is so wild! I have heard, rather indirectly, however, that it has become so noisy there—one actually must shout to be heard—imagine! Dear, dear, I know Betty will so enjoy the quiet of Northampton. But she was such a vivacious child—so full of life.

CLARA. And the devil!

MRS. WARREN. Yes, I am sure she will enjoy the quiet of Northampton.

CLARA. Gaud, ma'am, the biddies of North-

ampton can make more noise than all them trains in London town!

MRS. WARREN. Eh? What did you say, Clara?

CLARA. (*Shouting into the ear trumpet*) I said, ma'am, that Miss Betty should come back a very fine lady.

MRS. WARREN. Yes indeed, Clara, yes indeed. It was to one of the very best girls' schools in London. I was almost afraid to let her go alone. I really should have gone to take care of her. (*CLARA rolls her eyes heavenward*) But her father, dear man, always wanted her to be well educated. He was a Warren, you know—a typical Warren—and dear Betty is so like her father. I hope it was for the best she went—it was sort of a memorial to her dear father. She always was a bright child, you known. A poetical sort of a child—she takes that from my side of the family. I shall never forget her first poem. I learned the first stanza. I think there must have been twenty or thirty in all. I sent it to the *Times* but they did not print it—art is becoming so dreadfully democratic—the first stanza went:

The mist is rising from the sea,
The birds are wide awake,
I take my pen in hand to write
These verses for your sake.

So like Wordsworth, isn't it? And the punctuation was perfect, so beautiful and innocent.

CLARA. Lud! How she can talk!

MRS. WARREN. Eh? What did you say, Clara?

CLARA. (*Shouting*) I said nothing, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. (*Raising her ear trumpet*) I was sure I heard you making some sort of a noise, Clara.

CLARA. It—it must have been my asthma, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. It is the fog, Clara. Have you done anything for it—try goose grease and flannel—rub it in well—the goose grease, I mean.

CLARA. Yes, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. Have you heard the stage horn? Dear, dear—(*CLARA starts to go*) Oh, and Clara, before you go will you hand me something to read—I'm so nervous. I must read something to soothe my nerves—do you suppose anything could have happened?

CLARA. (*Taking up a magazine from the table*) Here is the new Graphic, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. No—no—I'm really afraid to read these magazines and newspapers—they are so full of accidents and murders and robberies—and weddings. No, Clara, I'll read my Bible—it is such a comfort—such a comfort. (*CLARA hands her the Bible from the table and starts out*) Book of Job—Book of Job. (*The knocker is heard*) There, that must be Betty—and we did not hear the stage horn! (*CLARA goes out.* MRS. WARREN *fumbles with her Bible*)

CLARA. (*From the door*) It's the new minister's wife, ma'am, Mrs. Pickering.

MRS. WARREN. Eh?

CLARA. (*Shouting in the trumpet*) Mrs. Pickering.

MRS. WARREN. Oh yes, yes, Mrs. Pickering

—have her come in, Clara. And Clara—here, put my Bible on the table in a conspicuous place—but not too conspicuous—just so.

(CLARA *thumps down the Bible on the table and goes out.*)

MRS. PICKERING. (*A demure, emaciated little woman enters from the door at the back. She bows*) Mrs. Warren, good afternoon.

MRS. WARREN. Come up to the fire, Mrs. Pickering. It is so damp outside. I wonder that more of us are not sick abed.

MRS. PICKERING. (*Rolling her eyes heavenward*) God is good to his lambs.

MRS. WARREN. Eh? Your lower limbs? Yes, now that you speak of it, that is where I suffer most.

MRS. PICKERING. You are so confidential.

MRS. WARREN. One should really wear a flannel underskirt these days.

MRS. PICKERING. Yes, speaking of flannels, that is just what I tell my husband. We have just finished packing another big box of heavy underwear and Bibles for the starving South Sea Islanders. They are so illiterate!

MRS. WARREN. Literature? No, I only read my Bible.

MRS. PICKERING. (*Dismissing the misunderstanding with a wave of her hand*) I heard from my Mary that you were expecting your daughter home from London on the stage from Bedford—you will excuse my late call—I am so anxious to meet your Betty, so anxious.

MRS. WARREN. Will you speak a little louder, Mrs. Pickering? I am sure you must

be saying something, though I can't hear a word—not too loud—just so.

MRS. PICKERING. (*Shouting into the trumpet*) I say I am so anxious to meet your Betty.

MRS. WARREN. Yes, we are expecting the dear child home to-day. I wonder if anything could have happened—it's such a long way from London to Northampton—such a very long way.

MRS. PICKERING. But you know there is a railroad as far as Bedford now.

MRS. WARREN. A what, Mrs. Pickering?

MRS. PICKERING. A railroad.

MRS. WARREN. (*With horror and indignation*) You really don't mean a steam rail?

MRS. PICKERING. Yes, indeed.

MRS. WARREN. Oh, but I know Betty would be far too sensible to ride on a steam railroad—it is just like taking one's life into one's own hands. What can people be thinking of to ride upon such things? Really I'm so worried—and the coach should be here—the world is coming to be so unreliable. (*The knocker is heard*) Oh, can that be Betty? No, she would surely come right in. One need not stand on ceremony in one's own home—that is, not too much, just a certain amount, you know, Mrs. Pickering, is good for the training of any well-bred child, not too much, you understand—or too little—just so.

CLARA. (*Entering and shouting in the trumpet*) Mrs. Lawty, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. Oh, Mrs. Lawty; have her come right in, Clara—and Clara, will you bring my black shawl? It is folded away in the chest—and Clara, be careful with it. (CLARA goes

out) It is a beautiful shawl. Mr. Warren brought it all the way from India—before we were married. I want Betty to have it when she——

MRS. LAWTY. (*Entering quietly and bowing*) Mrs. Warren, Mrs. Pickering. (*Going to MRS. WARREN*) I have brought you over a bit of mint jelly.

MRS. WARREN. Thank you, Mrs. Lawty, you are so kind. Oh, it's jelly. Do sit down, Mrs. Lawty.

MRS. LAWTY. My Nellie had it from Mrs. Pickering's Mary who got it from your Clara that your dear daughter Betty is coming home from London to-day. I am so anxious to see the dear child.

MRS. WARREN. Chill—no, you don't really mean it, Mrs. Lawty?

MRS. LAWTY. (*Shouting*) I say my Nellie had it from Mrs. Pickering's Mary who got it from your Clara that dear Betty is coming home to-day—the dear child.

MRS. WARREN. Yes, she is coming to-day. Did you hear anything else—concerning Betty, I mean, of course?

MRS. LAWTY. (*With deep interest*) Oh, is there more?

MRS. WARREN. You will pardon me but it's a secret, so to speak, for the present.

MRS. LAWTY. Yes, yes. But, my dear Mrs. Warren, there should be no secrets between friends.

MRS. WARREN. But you know it is really Betty's secret—not mine.

MRS. LAWTY. (*To MRS. PICKERING*) Secrets are so disconcerting! (*To MRS. WARREN*) But

you know I am so interested in Betty and everything that concerns her, so interested.

MRS. WARREN. Yes, yes.

MRS. LAWTY. (*To MRS. PICKERING*) Strange tales concerning Betty have come down from London. She is so ambitious—socially, I mean. Oh dear, I hope she has done nothing indiscreet.

MRS. WARREN. Things seem to happen so rapidly I can hardly realize Betty is a grown woman.

MRS. LAWTY. I wonder if the past year has changed her much. (*Shouting*) Changed her much.

MRS. WARREN. Yes, indeed, Mrs. Lawty, yes, indeed—everything has changed—the world is positively going round so fast that it makes me giddy. (*Confidentially*) I hear that Northampton is actually to have lights in the street!

MRS. LAWTY. Is it possible? Indeed there will soon be no privacy in the world.

MRS. PICKERING. Terrible!

MRS. LAWTY. I was reading in the *Times* that in London they are using trams without horses now.

MRS. WARREN. Eh?

MRS. LAWTY. I say in London they have trams without horses.

MRS. WARREN. Oh, dear, I wonder if anything could have happened.

MRS. PICKERING. I should never risk my life on one! It is a contrivance of the devil—the world is becoming so wicked!

MRS. WARREN. Trams without horses—steam railroads! It was wicked of me to let Betty go without my care—I should have gone to look after her, but of course——

MRS. LAWTY. Little good that would have done. (*Shouting*) Why right here in Northampton they are covering our main street with a new sort of covering—just like glass. I declare that I, for one, shall never walk on it.

MRS. PICKERING. Nor I. When I shop I shall go the back way. Modern improvements indeed!

MRS. LAWTY. Modern exterminators!

MRS. WARREN. Is that the knocker? I wonder who that can be. Clara, Clara!

CLARA. (*Entering from the back*) It's Mrs. Romney, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. Have her come right in, Clara. This is a surprise. We did not think that the ladies of Northampton knew of Betty's return to-day.

MRS. ROMNEY. (*Entering with gusto*) How do you do, Mrs. Warren. Good afternoon, Mrs. Pickering and Mrs. Lawty. (*To MRS. WARREN*) I heard that Betty was to return to-day—that is I had a rather unauthentic report of it. You see, I got it from my Sadie who had it from Mrs. Lawty's Nellie who got it from Mrs. Pickering's Mary who had it from Clara that Betty would be home on to-day's coach. I am so anxious to see the dear child and to hear the news of London. Things really happen there, you know. Northampton is so annoying and boring at times—nothing ever happens here—it is only reported to *have* happened.

MRS. LAWTY. Servants are such gossips!

MRS. ROMNEY. But so unreliable! They always seem to miss *the* essential thing—the thing of particular interest, so to speak.

MRS. LAWTY. Of particular interest?

MRS. ROMNEY. Of course. It is not Betty's return that interests me so much as *why* she is returning two months earlier than she expected.

MRS. LAWTY. There seems to be some secrecy in the whole affair.

MRS. ROMNEY. Secrecy?

MRS. WARREN. Do sit down Mrs. Romney—you flutter about so.

MRS. ROMNEY. Flutter! Indeed!

MRS. WARREN. Do sit down, Mrs. Romney.

MRS. ROMNEY. (*Sitting*) Really I can't stay very long. *I* have just stopped in for a few moments after having tea with Lady Bloshire, a most interesting person.

MRS. PICKERING. And so refined.

MRS. ROMNEY. Her Ladyship is so interesting and knows so much of London life, you know. Her son is returning from London in a few days—and Lady Bloshire is so happy.

MRS. PICKERING. Indeed she must be a true mother. She should be very happy to think that her son would come back to her from wicked London.

MRS. ROMNEY. Wicked, indeed, Mrs. Pickering! It is no such thing—London is glorious! His Lordship does not intend to stay here long, simply coming down on business, I think her Ladyship said—one is so busy when one is a Lord. He goes into the House next winter, you know.

MRS. LAWTY. Fancy one caring for London when one can have the quiet and refinement of Northampton.

MRS. ROMNEY. I was raised in London—Northampton—bah! (*The ladies, except MRS.*

WARREN, *who has fallen asleep, spring to their feet*) Pardon me, ladies. Pray be seated. My temper does overcome me at times.

MRS. PICKERING. Indeed! Temper is an attribute of the devil! You should do all in your power to overcome it.

MRS. LAWTY. If you will pardon me, Mrs. Romney, I should say that you show your London raising most *emphatically* at times.

MRS. ROMNEY. Pray let us continue our most interesting conversation. By the by, have you met the new young doctor? Dr. Twing? A most learned young man—just down from Oxford.

MRS. LAWTY. Indeed—and from London— young men are not what they were when I was a girl.

MRS. ROMNEY. I am sure Betty and he would be such good friends. It might be a match, you know—and that would keep him in Northampton perhaps. We should really do all we can to keep a few interesting people in our town.

MRS. PICKERING. I hope he will prove a steady young man. If he is there will be very little time for his playing around with the belles of Northampton—what with new pavements and street lamps, horseless trams and steam coaches, not to mention births and deaths, there will be enough to keep many doctors busy.

MRS. LAWTY. (*Whispering*) Betty was far too vivacious for any young gentleman before she left for London. There is nothing more discouraging to a man than a vivacious wife. I do hope for Mrs. Warren's sake that Betty has settled down, but from the things I have heard I fear she hasn't.

MRS. ROMNEY. Have you heard anything—anything interesting?

MRS. LAWTY. Nothing directly. But I understand Betty is very popular with the young gentlemen of London and——

MRS. ROMNEY. Indeed!

MRS. LAWTY. And I understand the gentlemen of London are, er—er, well, very different from the young gentlemen of Northampton.

MRS. ROMNEY. (*A little bitterly*) Oh, you know it is so easy to be a saint—a Northampton saint—I really think it takes a rather clever person to be devilish!

MRS. PICKERING. (*Protestingly*) Mrs. Romney!

CLARA. (*Entering from the door at the L.*) Here, ma'am, is your shawl.

MRS. WARREN. (*Awakening*) Eh? What? Oh, yes, my shawl—put it over my shoulders, Clara—it will keep me warm—but not too warm—just so. Pardon me, ladies, I just shut my eyes to keep out the light—your conversation was so interesting and so refined. (*The coach horn sounds. CLARA runs to the window and looks out*) Clara come away from the window!

CLARA. (*Shouting in the trumpet*) It's the coach, ma'am, it's the coach!

MRS. WARREN. Is it really, Clara? Oh, ladies, I am so happy to know that nothing has happened. Clara, will you put a little coal on the fire—just poke it up a bit, you know—that is, not too much, but just so, Clara. Clara, light the candles in the hall—not all of them, Clara—just two.

(CLARA goes out.)

MRS. ROMNEY. I am so anxious to hear the gossip of dear old London.

MRS. LAWTY. How familiar!

MRS. WARREN. (*Rising and going to the window*) Ladies, you really must pardon me—I shall only look once, just a peep—I am so worried, you know, and so anxious—yes, there she is, ladies—ladies, I can hardly contain myself—the dear child—oh, she looks so healthy—just like her father, dear man, so like her father. (*She goes to her chair by the fire and assumes a queenly air of expectancy. There is a loud, clear laugh from the hall.*)

BETTY. (*From the hall*) Dear, dear Clara—a lot of ladies, where? Oh, but you mustn't say that, Clara—a glorious time, yes, it was ripping. Is mother in here, Clara? Yes, yes, yes.

(*The ladies look at each other dumbfounded.*)

MRS. LAWTY. I am afraid she has not changed for the better. (*This in a whisper. BETTY stands framed in the doorway. She is dressed in an enormous hoop skirt, lace mitts and a high poke hat. She is followed by CLARA who carries band boxes and portmanteaux*)

BETTY. Mother! Ladies! (*She runs to her mother*) Dear, dear, dear old mumsey darling.

MRS. WARREN. Betty, dear, you are home again—can it really be you, dear, dear child—you look so fresh and happy—and healthy.

MRS. LAWTY. Overly healthy!

MRS. WARREN. So fresh and healthy—but Betty, dear, what have you on your face?

BETTY. Nothing, mother dear—does it show?

MRS. PICKERING. Powder!

MRS. WARREN. Betty dear, you see the ladies of Northampton are here to see you.

MRS. LAWTY. Rather to see you, Mrs. Warren.

MRS. WARREN. Mrs. Pickering, my daughter Betty—Mrs. Pickering.

MRS. PICKERING. How do you do, Miss Betty.

BETTY. (*Curtsyng*) Mrs. Pickering—Mrs. Romney, Mrs. Lawty—
Mrs. Romney, Mrs. Lawty—

MRS. ROMNEY. Betty, dear, what is the news of London?

BETTY. Oh, there is so much to tell of London, you know.

MRS. ROMNEY. Yes, yes, of course. London is much larger than Northampton. (*With a withering look at MRS. LAWTY*) Though some people don't realize it.

BETTY. And so many lovely people live in London.

MRS. ROMNEY. (*With a withering look at MRS. PICKERING who squirms*) So many interesting people.

MRS. LAWTY. (*Coldly*) But so few—er—wholly refined people.

MRS. ROMNEY. Indeed!

MRS. LAWTY. Betty dear, we have heard so many tales of you and—

BETTY. (*With a little catch of her breath*) And whom?

MRS. LAWTY. And London.

BETTY. (*Glancing at her mother*) Oh!

MRS. ROMNEY. Did you see the queen?

BETTY. Indeed, Mrs. Romney, many times. She is a beautiful young girl.

MRS. LAWTY. How slightlying you talk of royalty!

MRS. PICKERING. London is becoming so dreadfully democratic.

MRS. WARREN. Betty dear, I am so glad to have you home again—so happy—I have been so worried—I hope you will like Northampton better now.

BETTY. (*Looking at the women and then going close to her mother*) No, mumsey, I am sure I never shall.

MRS. WARREN. You must be tired, dear.

BETTY. No, dear, not very. You see I took the steam rail as far as Bedford—Oh, mumsey, it was ripping! You surely must go to London soon. We went all of fifteen miles in an hour sometimes!

MRS. WARREN. Betty, how could you?

BETTY. But, mumsey, it was glorious—just like flying—and mumsey, we ate on the train. Oh, it was such fun!

MRS. LAWTY. Fancy having one's dinner pulled on ahead of one, like a dog chasing his tail!

MRS. ROMNEY. Next we will be having beds on these trains.

MRS. PICKERING. Never!

MRS. LAWTY. Can you imagine one undoing one's bodice in such a public place?

MRS. PICKERING. For shame—how can you think of such terrible things and speak of them aloud before this young lady—and before all of us?

MRS. ROMNEY. But my dear Mrs. Pickering, can't you see that we are in a new era and that the past is irrevocable?

MRS. LAWTY. Not in Northampton, thank heaven. Here there are a few sane people.

MRS. WARREN. Betty, did you have Clara take your portmanteau to your room?

BETTY. Yes, mumsey dear, three of them.

MRS. WARREN. Betty! Whatever possessed you—what can you ever do with three of them.

BETTY. They are full of clothes, mumsey; dresses and bonnettes—beautiful ones—pink and blue and lavender.

MRS. PICKERING. Dress is a tool of the devil. Now in the South Sea Islands they——

MRS. WARREN. But what can you ever do with them all—wherever can you wear so many dresses? Indeed I do not know how it is in London, but in Northampton Sunday still comes but once a week—now when I was your age I had a nice, a very nice one for Sundays, a white one for christenings and a black one for Northampton funerals. But I suppose when one is about to be——

BETTY. (*Covering her mother's mouth with her hand—lovingly shaking her finger at MRS. WARREN*) Sh—sh—mumsey dear, we must have more color. It will not be so dark and dreary in Northampton soon. Lord Bloshire has seen to it that we have street lights, just like they have in London. Oh, he is going to bring so many improvements to Northampton—perhaps next year the steam rail will be extended from Bedford.

MRS. LAWTY. You don't mean, child, that we may have one of those horrid noisy things coming into Northampton?

BETTY. Lord Bloshire is going to do everything to make Northampton a modern town.

MRS. PICKERING. Modern indeed!

MRS. LAWTY. (*Sweetly*) But perhaps his Lordship knows best.

MRS. ROMNEY. Yes, he probably knows what we need more than we do ourselves. He has spent so much of his life in London.

MRS. LAWTY. But think of the people of questionable character such a public affair might bring to Northampton. One will not be able to venture beyond one's own garden.

BETTY. But really, ladies, such things are for the best. Don't you really want to see Northampton a modern town?

MRS. PICKERING. Modern, my dear, but not too modern. Now in the South Sea Islands, you know, the cannibals——

MRS. ROMNEY. Well, I sincerely hope *something* happens to make Northampton modern—and interesting.

MRS. LAWTY. Mrs. Romney, it *is* interesting. Besides being a beautiful town it is the site of the Bloshires, one of England's oldest families. A most important asset I should say. (*With sarcasm*) But then, of course, when one has been raised in London——

MRS. ROMNEY. Betty dear, you seem to be very familiar with the affairs of his Lordship. Is it possible that you could have seen him in London?

BETTY. Yes, Mrs. Romney.

MRS. ROMNEY. But surely you had no occasion to talk to him, Betty?

BETTY. Yes, Mrs. Romney.

MRS. LAWTY. Girls are becoming so bold nowadays. Now when I was a girl I never——

MRS. ROMNEY. How interesting, and what

did he say, Miss Betty, the time you talked to him?

BETTY. I just don't remember all he said, Mrs. Romney, but of course he was very anxious to hear about Northampton again. His father and mine were great friends, you know.

MRS. LAWTY. I suppose even a Lord must condescend to speak to the people from his home place. I think it is rather impertinent that——

MRS. ROMNEY. And did he speak of the people, the best people, of course, of Northampton, Betty?

BETTY. I remember very distinctly that he asked——

LADIES. (*On the very edges of their chairs*)
Yes, yes, yes——

BETTY. He asked me if all the fogies of Northampton were still alive.

MRS. LAWTY. Fogies—now I wonder what he could have meant by that—I hope it is complimentary.

MRS. PICKERING. It sounds doubtful.

MRS. ROMNEY. I was at tea with her Ladyship this afternoon. His Lordship is coming down from London soon.

BETTY. Yes, I know.

MRS. ROMNEY. Oh, then you must have seen the *Times*—they always publish such interesting things about the nobility.

BETTY. I saw his Lordship before I left London.

MRS. ROMNEY. Oh, then perhaps——

MRS. WARREN. Betty dear, I'm sure the ladies will pardon you if you care to go to your room, though I'm sure their conversation is

most interesting. You must be very tired. Clara has put a little fire in the grate, dear. (*She calls*) Clara, Clara!

CLARA. (*Entering from the L.*) Yes, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. Will you please see that Miss Betty's room is cozy—and, Clara, don't forget the hot water.

CLARA. I won't, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. Ladies, you will excuse Betty?

(*They all nod.*)

BETTY. If you please, ladies, I should so like to dress.

MRS. ROMNEY. Yes, indeed, Betty, I am sorry you do not know more of London gossip. I would ask you over to tea but I am really so busy these days.

MRS. PICKERING. I hope I shall see you at church. You must forgive me if I do not call again soon, there is so much to do in our foreign mission work.

MRS. LAWTY. Good day, Miss Betty. I trust you will feel at home in Northampton. I shall no doubt see you again before the summer is over—Northampton is not a large place.

BETTY. You are all so kind. (*She turns at the door and throws her mother a kiss, bows to the ladies*) Au revoir, ladies.

MRS. WARREN. Dear child, so delicate.

MRS. LAWTY. Ugh, the impertinent little creature—putting on her fine airs.

MRS. ROMNEY. Did you hear her talk of his Lordship, just as if she were real well acquainted with him. I suppose she will be telling us next that she had an audience with the queen.

MRS. PICKERING. Of course, I do not know

the child very well, but I do believe that it is not best to send girls away from home for their schooling—they become so bold and so vain. Did you hear her telling her mother about her dresses, as if clothes were the only thing in the world.

MRS. LAWTY. I feel so sorry for her mother, so quiet and unassuming. I am afraid Betty will drive her to her grave before her time. Well, I hope she will not try her airs before Lady Bloshire, because—did Lady Bloshire, by any chance, mention her while you were there this afternoon?

MRS. ROMNEY. Let me see—come to think of it, I believe she did say something, but I am sure it was something trivial.

MRS. LAWTY. Of course.

MRS. ROMNEY. I was so interested to hear about his Lordship that I paid little attention to anything else. It seems he is very much in love—her Ladyship did not mention who with—however, I daresay some very fine London lady.

MRS. WARREN. Do you not think dear Betty is a little lady? Her father, dear man, would have been so proud of her I'm sure.

MRS. PICKERING. (*Shouting*) I hope it is for the best she went away.

MRS. LAWTY. (*Shouting*) Indeed I hope she has learned something from her books.

MRS. ROMNEY. (*Shouting*) She knows so little about London society I trust she has been diligent in her studies. Really I must be going, Mrs. Warren. I suppose you do not go out very often now, but if you do happen to be out come in and see me sometime.

MRS. WARREN. Yes, yes, but I get out very little these days—and I will have so much to say to dear Betty. I am sure Betty will be over, however.

MRS. ROMNEY. (*Shouting*) I shall be glad to have *you* come over, Mrs. Warren. I am having a tea for her Ladyship next week so you will pardon me, I am sure, if I am too busy to receive callers.

MRS. PICKERING. (*Shouting*) I must be going, Mrs. Warren, I really must. I hope Betty will come to church every Sunday.

MRS. LAWTY. (*Shouting*) Good day, Mrs. Warren, good day. This little chat with you this afternoon has been most entertaining. I hope I shall see Betty again some time, but indeed I expect to be so busy the next few weeks that I shall be unable to do any entertaining.

(The knocker is heard—the women look at each other in surprise.)

MRS. WARREN. Yes, yes, ladies, do come in often now that——

CLARA. (*Entering from the back. She looks at the women and then at MRS. WARREN as if she would rather not speak*) It's Lady Bloshire, ma'am—her Ladyship.

MRS. WARREN. Oh, Lady Bloshire. Oh, have her come right in, Clara. Oh, and Clara, please call Betty, I know her Ladyship will be so glad to see the dear child. (*The ladies resume their seats*) And Clara, tell her to dress her hair—not too much—just so—and light *all* the candles in the hall—Clara, you may serve tea—tea in the Chelsea china.

(CLARA holds her head high as she passes the ladies.)

THE LADIES. Oh, her Ladyship. Oh—ah—oh—I shall stay a little longer—yes, really—no—is it possible?—etc.

LADY BLOSHIRE. (*Bowing from doorway*) Mrs. Warren—Ladies of Northampton. (*She talks with an air of superiority, yet she is a motherly woman*)

ALL. (*Rising and bowing*) Your Ladyship.

MRS. WARREN. Pray be seated, Lady Bloshire.

LADY BLOSHIRE. Thank you, Mrs. Warren. It is indeed a pleasure to see you so well.

MRS. WARREN. Yes, yes—I am glad to see you well, Lady Bloshire—I am feeling much better—happier now that Betty is home again.

LADY BLOSHIRE. And you should, Mrs. Warren, she is such a little fairy. I shall be glad to see her again, we had such a wonderful time when I was in London. The dear child enjoyed everything so much it was really a joy to see her so happy. I am so glad she has returned to Northampton, but I am afraid we shall be unable to keep her with us long, my son is so determined that they live in London.

(*The ladies look at each other in amazement.*)

MRS. WARREN. So Betty told me in her letters, but I am really afraid to have her go so far away from home. Indeed I shall not think of it until the time comes.

LADY BLOSHIRE. But when one is married,

Mrs. Warren—— However, I hope we shall see them often.

MRS. WARREN. Yes indeed, yes indeed.

MRS. ROMNEY. Did your Ladyship say something of marriage?

LADY BLOSHIRE. Did I really? There now, how stupid of me—and nothing was to be said for the present—please forget——

BETTY. (*Entering and running to LADY BLOSHIRE*) Lady Bloshire!

LADY BLOSHIRE. Dear, dear child. (*She kisses her*)

MRS. LAWTY. (*Shouting to LADY BLOSHIRE*) We are so sure the last year—I beg your pardon—(*She drops her voice*) has been so beneficial to dear Betty.

MRS. PICKERING. Indeed Northampton is proud of her.

MRS. ROMNEY. She is so cultured and refined.

BETTY. Please, please, ladies. You are all too kind.

LADY BLOSHIRE. Dear child, it is good to have you with us again.

BETTY. And to be with you.

MRS. ROMNEY. Betty dear, I do so want you to come to my tea.

MRS. LAWTY. I hope we can arrange soon to have a little party for——

MRS. PICKERING. The ladies of our auxiliary will be so proud to have you join them.

BETTY. Thank you, ladies, thank you, but I shall have so much to do, you know, you will excuse me I am sure if——

CLARA. (*Entering with the tea things*) The tea, ma'am.

MRS. WARREN. Oh, yes—please serve it, Clara. Dear, dear, you all look so happy—I really wish I could hear better—I must miss so much that is interesting—dear, dear——

MRS. ROMNEY. I hear that we are really going to have street lights, your Ladyship.

MRS. PICKERING. Indeed it will be a great blessing to have some light in Northampton.

MRS. LAWTY. And perhaps a steam rail.

MRS. ROMNEY. That will bring us so much closer to London, so much closer to civilization.

(The ladies with cups in their hands gather around LADY BLOSHIRE and BETTY; there is a continual buzz of Oh's and Ah's as the curtain descends.)

NOT SO LONG AGO

Comedy in a Prologue, 3 acts, and Epilogue. By Arthur Richman. 5 males, 7 females. 2 interiors, 1 exterior. Costumes, 1876. Plays a full evening.

Arthur Richman has constructed his play around the Cinderella legend. The playwright has shown great wisdom in his choice of material, for he has cleverly crossed the Cinderella theme with a strain of Romeo and Juliet. Mr. Richman places his young lovers in the picturesque New York of forty years ago. This time Cinderella is a seamstress in the home of a social climber, who may have been the first of her kind, though we doubt it. She is interested sentimentally in the son of this house. Her father, learning of her infatuation for the young man without learning also that it is imaginary on the young girl's part, starts out to discover his intentions. He is a poor inventor. The mother of the youth, ambitious chiefly for her children, shudders at the thought of marriage for her son with a sewing-girl. But the Prince contrives to put the slipper on the right foot, and the end is happiness. The play is quaint and agreeable and the three acts are rich in the charm of love and youth. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

THE LOTTERY MAN

Comedy in 3 acts, by Rida Johnson Young. 4 males, 5 females. 3 easy interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

In "The Lottery Man" Rida Johnson Young has seized upon a custom of some newspapers to increase their circulation by clever schemes. Mrs. Young has made the central figure in her famous comedy a newspaper reporter, Jack Wright. Wright owes his employer money, and he agrees to turn in one of the most sensational scoops the paper has ever known. His idea is to conduct a lottery, with *himself* as the prize. The lottery is announced. Thousands of old maids buy coupons. Meantime Wright falls in love with a charming girl. Naturally he fears that he may be won by someone else and starts to get as many tickets as his limited means will permit. Finally the last day is announced. The winning number is 1323, and is held by Lizzie, an old maid, in the household of the newspaper owner. Lizzie refuses to give up. It is discovered, however, that she has stolen the ticket. With this clue, the reporter threatens her with arrest. Of course the coupon is surrendered and Wright gets the girl of his choice. Produced at the Bijou Theater, New York, with great success. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Comedy in 3 acts. By James Montgomery. 5 males, 6 females. Modern costumes. 2 interiors. Plays 2½ hours.

Is it possible to tell the absolute truth—even for twenty-four hours? It is—at least Bob Bennett, the hero of "Nothing but the Truth," accomplished the feat. The bet he made with his partners, his friends, and his fiancée—these are the incidents in William Collier's tremendous comedy hit. "Nothing but the Truth" can be whole-heartedly recommended as one of the most sprightly, amusing and popular comedies of which this country can boast. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SEVENTEEN

A comedy of youth, in 4 acts. By Booth Tarkington. 8 males, 6 females. 1 exterior, 2 interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

It is the tragedy of William Sylvanus Baxter that he has ceased to be sixteen and is not yet eighteen. Baby, child, boy, youth and grown-up are definite phenomena. The world knows them and has learned to put up with them. Seventeen is not an age, it is a disease. In its turbulent bosom the leavings of a boy are at war with the beginnings of a man.

In his heart, William Sylvanus Baxter knows all the tortures and delights of love; he is capable of any of the heroisms of his heroic sex. But he is still sent on the most humiliating errands by his mother, and depends upon his father for the last nickel of spending money.

Silly Bill fell in love with Lolo, the Baby-Talk Lady, a vapid if amiable little flirt. To woo her in a manner worthy of himself (and incidentally of her) he stole his father's evening clothes. When his wooings became a nuisance to the neighborhood, his mother stole the clothes back, and had them altered to fit the middle-aged form of her husband, thereby keeping William at home in the evening.

But when it came to the Baby-Talk Lady's good-bye dance, not to be present was unendurable. How William Sylvanus again got the dress suit, and how as he was wearing it at the party the negro servant, Genesis, disclosed the fact that the proud garment was in reality his father's, are some of the elements in this charming comedy of youth.

"Seventeen" is a story of youth, love and summer time. It is a work of exquisite human sympathy and delicious humor. Produced by Stuart Walker at the Booth Theatre, New York, it enjoyed a run of four years in New York and on the road. Strongly recommended for High School production. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

TWEEDLES

Comedy in 3 acts, by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson. 5 males, 4 females. 1 interior. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

Julian, scion of the blue-blooded Castleburys, falls in love with Winsora Tweedle, daughter of the oldest family in a Maine village. The Tweedles esteem the name because it has been rooted in the community for 200 years, and they look down on "summer people" with the vigor that only "summer boarder" communities know.

The Castleburys are aghast at the possibility of a match, and call on the Tweedles to urge how impossible such an alliance would be. Mr. Castlebury laboriously explains the barrier of social caste, and the elder Tweedle takes it that these unimportant summer folk are terrified at the social eminence of the Tweedles.

Tweedle generously agrees to co-operate with the Castleburys to prevent the match. But Winsora brings her father to realize that in reality the Castleburys look upon them as inferiors. The old man is infuriated, and threatens vengeance, but is checkmated when Julian unearths a number of family skeletons and argues that father isn't a Tweedle, since the blood has been so diluted that little remains. Also, Winsora takes the matter into her own hands and outfaces the old man. So the youngsters go forth triumphant. "Tweedles" is Booth Tarkington at his best. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

JUST SUPPOSE

A whimsical comedy in 3 acts, by A. E. Thomas, author of "Her Husband's Wife," "Come Out of the Kitchen," etc. 6 males, 2 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Costumes, modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

It was rumored that during his last visit the Prince of Wales appeared for a brief spell under an assumed name somewhere in Virginia. It is on this story that A. E. Thomas based "Just Suppose." The theme is handled in an original manner. Linda Lee Stafford meets one George Shipley (in reality is the Prince of Wales). It is a case of love at first sight, but, alas, princes cannot select their mates and thereby hangs a tale which Mr. Thomas has woven with infinite charm. The atmosphere of the South with its chivalry dominates the story, touching in its sentiment and lightened here and there with delightful comedy. "Just Suppose" scored a big hit at the Henry Miller Theatre, New York, with Patricia Collinge. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

COME OUT OF THE KITCHEN

A charming comedy in 3 acts. Adapted by A. E. Thomas from the story of the same name by Alice Duer Miller. 6 males, 5 females. 3 interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

The story of "Come Out of the Kitchen" is written around a Virginia family of the old aristocracy, by the name of Daingerfield, who, finding themselves temporarily embarrassed, decide to rent their magnificent home to a rich Yankee. One of the conditions of the lease by the well-to-do New Englander stipulates that a competent staff of white servants should be engaged for his sojourn at the stately home. This servant question presents practically insurmountable difficulties, and one of the daughters of the family conceives the mad-cap idea that she, her sister and their two brothers shall act as the domestic staff for the wealthy Yankee. Olivia Daingerfield, who is the ringleader in the merry scheme, adopts the cognomen of Jane Allen, and elects to preside over the destinies of the kitchen. Her sister, Elizabeth, is appointed housemaid. Her elder brother, Paul, is the butler, and Charley, the youngest of the group, is appointed to the position of bootboy. When Burton Crane arrives from the North, accompanied by Mrs. Faulkner, her daughter, and Crane's attorney, Tucker, they find the staff of servants to possess so many methods of behavior out of the ordinary that amusing complications begin to arise immediately. Olivia's charm and beauty impress Crane above everything else, and the merry story continues through a maze of delightful incidents until the real identity of the heroine is finally disclosed. But not until Crane has professed his love for his charming cook, and the play ends with the brightest prospects of happiness for these two young people. "Come Out of the Kitchen," with Ruth Chatterton in the leading rôle, made a notable success on its production by Henry Miller at the Cohan Theatre, New York. It was also a great success at the Strand Theatre, London. A most ingenious and entertaining comedy, and we strongly recommend it for amateur production. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

GOING SOME

Play in 4 acts. By Paul Armstrong and Rex Beach. 12 males, 4 females. 2 exteriors, 1 interior. Costumes, modern and cowboy. Plays a full evening.

Described by the authors as the "chronicle of a certain lot of college men and girls, with a tragic strain of phonograph and cowboys." A rollicking good story, full of action, atmosphere, comedy and drama, redolent of the adventurous spirit of youth. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
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MRS. WIGGS OF THE CABBAGE PATCH

Dramatization in 3 acts, by Anne Crawford Flexner from the novel by Alice Hegan Rice. 15 males, 11 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Costumes modern and rustic. Plays a full evening.

A capital dramatization of the ever-beloved Mrs. Wiggs and her friends, people who have entered the hearts and minds of a nation. Mrs. Schultz and Lovey Mary, the pessimistic Miss Hazy and the others need no new introduction. Here is characterization, humor, pathos, and what is best and most appealing in modern American life. The amateur acting rights are reserved for the present in all cities and towns where there are stock companies. Royalty will be quoted on application for those cities and towns where it may be presented by amateurs.

Price, 75 Cents.

THE FOUR-FLUSHER

Comedy in 3 acts. By Cæsar Dunn. 8 males, 5 females. 2 interiors. Modern costumes. Plays 2¼ hours.

A comedy of hustling American youth, "The Four-Flusher" is one of those clean and bright plays which reveal the most appealing characteristics of our native types. Here is an amusing story of a young shoe clerk who through cleverness, personality, and plenty of wholesome faith in himself, becomes a millionaire. The play is best described as "breezy." It is full of human touches, and develops a most interesting story. It may be whole-heartedly recommended to high schools. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)

Price, 75 Cents.

PALS FIRST

Comedy in a prologue and 3 acts. By Lee Wilson Dodd. 8 males, 3 females. 1 interior, 1 exterior. Modern costumes. Plays 2½ hours.

Based on the successful novel of the same name by F. P. Elliott, "Pals First" is a decidedly picturesque mystery play. Danny and the Dominie, a pair of tramps, enter a mansion and persuade the servants and friends that they belong there. They are not altogether wrong, though it requires the intervention of a judge, two detectives, a villain and an attractive girl to untangle the complications. A most ingenious play, well adapted to performance by high schools and colleges. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)

Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

DADDY LONG-LEGS

A charming comedy in 4 acts. By Jean Webster. **The** full cast calls for 6 males, 7 females and 6 orphans, but the play, by the easy doubling of some of the characters, may be played by 4 males, 4 females and 3 orphans. The orphans appear only in the first act and may be played by small girls of any age. Four easy interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

Many readers of current fiction will recall Jean Webster's "Daddy Long-Legs." Miss Webster dramatized her story and it was presented at the Gaiety Theatre in New York, under Henry Miller's direction, with Ruth Chatterton in the principal rôle. "Daddy Long-Legs" tells the story of Judy, a pretty little drudge in a bleak New England orphanage. One day, a visiting trustee becomes interested in Judy and decides to give her a chance. She does not know the name of her benefactor, but simply calls him Daddy Long-Legs, and writes him letters brimming over with fun and affection. From the Foundling's Home she goes to a fashionable college for girls and there develops the romance that constitutes much of the play's charm. The New York Times reviewer, on the morning after the Broadway production, wrote the following: "If you will take your pencil and write down, one below the other, the words delightful, charming, sweet, beautiful and entertaining, and then draw a line and add them up, the answer will be 'Daddy Long-Legs.' To that result you might even add brilliant, pathetic and humorous, but the answer even then would be just what it was before—the play which Miss Jean Webster has made from her book, 'Daddy Long-Legs,' and which was presented at the Gaiety last night. To attempt to describe the simplicity and beauty of 'Daddy Long-Legs' would be like attempting to describe the first breath of Spring after an exceedingly tiresome and hard Winter." "Daddy Long-Legs" enjoyed a two-years' run in New York, and was then toured for over three years. It is now published in play form for the first time. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

THE FAMOUS MRS. FAIR

A comedy in 4 acts. By James Forbes. 3 males, 10 females. 2 interiors. Modern costumes. Plays a full evening.

An absorbing play of modern American family life. "The Famous Mrs. Fair" is concerned with a strenuous lady who returns from overseas to lecture, and consequently neglects her daughter, who is just saved in time from disaster. Acted with great success by Blanche Bates and Henry Miller. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS

Comedy in 3 acts. By Mary Kennedy and Ruth Hawthorne. 6 males, 6 females. Modern costumes. 2 interiors. Plays 2½ hours.

The characters, scenes and situations are thoroughly up-to-date in this altogether delightful American comedy. The heroine is a woman of tremendous energy, who manages a business—she manages everything—with great success, and at home presides over the destinies of a growing son and daughter. Her struggle to give the children the opportunities she herself has missed, and the children's ultimate revolt against her well-meaning management—that is the basis of the plot. The son who is cast for the part of artist and the daughter who is to go on the stage offer numerous opportunities for the development of the comic possibilities in the theme.

The play is one of the most delightful, yet thought-provoking American comedies of recent years, and is warmly recommended to all amateur groups. (Royalty on application.) Price, 75 Cents.

IN THE NEXT ROOM

Melodrama in 3 acts. By Eleanor Robson and Harriet Ford. 8 males, 3 females. 2 interiors. Modern costumes. Plays 2¼ hours.

"Philip Vantine has bought a rare copy of an original Boulton cabinet and ordered it shipped to his New York home from Paris. When it arrives it is found to be the original itself, the possession of which is desired by many strange people. Before the mystery concerned with the cabinet's shipment can be cleared up, two persons meet mysterious death fooling with it and the happiness of many otherwise happy actors is threatened" (Burns Mantle). A first-rate mystery play, comprising all the elements of suspense, curiosity, comedy and drama. "In the Next Room" is quite easy to stage. It can be unreservedly recommended to high schools and colleges. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

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COME OUT OF THE KITCHEN

A charming comedy in 3 acts. Adapted by A. E. Thomas from the story of the same name by Alice Duer Miller. 6 males, 5 females. 3 interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

The story of "Come Out of the Kitchen" is written around a Virginia family of the old aristocracy, by the name of Daingerfield, who, finding themselves temporarily embarrassed, decide to rent their magnificent home to a rich Yankee. One of the conditions of the lease by the well-to-do New Englander stipulates that a competent staff of white servants should be engaged for his sojourn at the stately home. This servant question presents practically insurmountable difficulties, and one of the daughters of the family conceives the mad-cap idea that she, her sister and their two brothers shall act as the domestic staff for the wealthy Yankee. Olivia Daingerfield, who is the ringleader in the merry scheme, adopts the cognomen of Jane Allen, and elects to preside over the destinies of the kitchen. Her sister, Elizabeth, is appointed housemaid. Her elder brother, Paul, is the butler, and Charley, the youngest of the group, is appointed to the position of bootboy. When Burton Crane arrives from the North, accompanied by Mrs. Faulkner, her daughter, and Crane's attorney, Tucker, they find the staff of servants to possess so many methods of behavior out of the ordinary that amusing complications begin to arise immediately. Olivia's charm and beauty impress Crane above everything else, and the merry story continues through a maze of delightful incidents until the real identity of the heroine is finally disclosed. But not until Crane has professed his love for his charming cook, and the play ends with the brightest prospects of happiness for these two young people. "Come Out of the Kitchen," with Ruth Chatterton in the leading rôle, made a notable success on its production by Henry Miller at the Cohan Theatre, New York. It was also a great success at the Strand Theatre, London. A most ingenious and entertaining comedy, and we strongly recommend it for amateur production. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

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